

Pop-up Blockers

More and more often pop-up blockers are being bundled with browser software. Their purpose is to block the display of those unwanted, irritating and pesky advertisements that we all wish we could eliminate when surfing the Internet. In particular, they prevent the opening of anonymous windows -- that is, windows that are not created by the user actively clicking on a link. The unfortunate thing is that there are many other useful tasks that need to create anonymous windows and the pop-up blockers interfere in their functionality.

The Rims Web application uses anonymous windows to perform behind-the-scenes processing that makes the windows more user-friendly. One area in which an anonymous window is used is to unlock budget maintenance records. A small window is brought up behind the main viewing screen through which the unlock command is sent to the web server. If you have closed down the browser when you are done with Rims Web, you may have noticed a small blue window pop-up with the message: "Please wait ... unlocking records." Pop-up blockers prevent the unlocking of records by preventing the display of the pop-up.

If you see a message that says an office is locked by another user when you try to access it through the budget maintenance window, you or someone else at your FMC may have a pop-up blocker activated that is preventing the anonymous window from issuing the unlock commands. There are two solutions to the problem. The first solution, and the preferred solution, is to configure the pop-up blocker not to block pop-ups from the <http://rims.nws.noaa.gov> URL. If the specific pop-up blocker cannot be configured to allow pop-ups from certain URLs then it must be turned off when the Rims Web application is in use.

By one count, there are at least 138 different pop-up blockers available to users (<http://www.popup-killer-review.com/all-blockers.htm>). Unfortunately, most users download pop-up blockers and install them without knowing it. They are often bundled into a toolbar tool, such as the Yahoo, MSN or AOL toolbars. And, if the Windows XP Service Pack 2 has been installed on your work station, it is part of your Internet Explorer.

The first step in fixing the pop-up blocker is determining whether you even have a pop-up blocker add-in installed in your Internet Explorer. If you have Windows XP, Service Pack 2, there is an option for the pop-up blocker on the tools menu

(http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/web/sp2_popupblocker.msp). Often there is an icon somewhere on your Internet Explorer toolbar. Here are links that show you what those icons look like on three of the more popular toolbars:

Yahoo: [http://toolbar.yahoo.com/config/slv4_page?p=featurepop&cpdl=;](http://toolbar.yahoo.com/config/slv4_page?p=featurepop&cpdl=)
MSN: [http://toolbar.msn.com/tour_suite/popup.aspx;](http://toolbar.msn.com/tour_suite/popup.aspx)
Netscape: [http://channels.netscape.com/search/install.jsp.](http://channels.netscape.com/search/install.jsp)

And yes, it is possible to have a Netscape toolbar even though you are using Microsoft Internet Explorer.

It is possible to have a pop-up blocker even if you cannot find it on the Tools menu or on your toolbar. The toolbar can be hidden and still be activated. One way to see hidden toolbars is to right click in the gray area of the toolbar at the top of your IE browser.

The second step is to configure the pop-up blocker to permit pop-ups from the Rims Web application. Most pop-up blockers allow the user to enter a URL as a trusted site. The URL you should add to the list is <http://rims.nws.noaa.gov>.

If it is not apparent how to configure the pop-up blocker, ask the network administrator at your site. (If your network administrator needs help, he/she can contact the RIMS network administrator, Barbara Alston.)

If your pop-up blocker cannot be configured, then it will have to be turned off whenever you use the Rims Web application. Once again, see your site's network administrator if you need help with this.